



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



## WFP ZAMBIA

### COUNTRY BRIEF

March 2026

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In February, WFP assisted 146,800 people with food and nutrition assistance, distributing 1,247 metric tons of food and USD 67,175 through cash-based transfers.
- Collaboration with Government is strengthening nutrition, climate-smart agriculture, and shock-responsive social protection systems. Expanding social behavioural change (SBC), IYCF, digital advisory tools, and anticipatory frameworks presents opportunities for partners to reinforce national capacities.
- Improving last-mile delivery and resilience infrastructure is central to long-term food and nutrition security. Priorities include market access and warehousing upgrades, water harvesting expansion, production unit completion, and timely drought recovery interventions.

#### IN NUMBERS



**146,805** people assisted in February 2026



**41%**  
Male



**59%**  
Female



**1,247 mt** food distributed



**USD 67,175** cash transferred



**USD 4M** (MAR – AUG 2026) net funding requirements

Pupil at Maimwene School poses with a nutritious lunch. WFP/Joseph Kaluba

#### SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Humanitarian needs in Zambia continue to be driven by recurrent climate shocks, persistent rural poverty, and constrained fiscal space, with droughts, flooding and high temperatures undermining agricultural production and eroding household resilience.
- Vulnerabilities remain acute among women, youth, children and refugees, who face high levels of food insecurity, limited livelihood opportunities, and elevated protection risks, including widespread malnutrition and stunting.
- Structural drivers of food insecurity, including low agricultural productivity, high post-harvest losses, limited access to markets, and restricted financing, continue to affect smallholder farmers, particularly women, young people and persons with disabilities.
- WFP continues to support food insecure and refugee populations during the lean season. Coordinated partner engagement remains important to sustain coverage amid pipeline and uplift constraints, ensuring consistent assistance across targeted districts.
- WFP is supporting the Government through an integrated approach that provides life-saving food and nutrition assistance, strengthens livelihoods and food systems, and enhances national capacities for emergency preparedness and shock-responsive social protection, in line with the [Zambia Country Strategic Plan \(2023–2028\)](#) and its [five Strategic Outcomes](#).

## OPERATIONAL UPDATES

### General Food Assistance

- In February, WFP continued monthly cash assistance in Mantapala, reaching 10,095 refugees with USD 67,175. Under the People's Republic of China-funded lean season response, maize and bean distributions began across eight districts, reaching 93,492 people. Through nutrition, social behaviour change, WFP supported smallholder farmer sensitisation by distributing over 500 printed materials promoting bean consumption and improved dietary practices. WFP procured 6,512 mt of maize, with 1,146 mt of maize and 101 mt of beans distributed to 93,492 people in Western and Southern Provinces. WFP also supported regional emergency response efforts by dispatching 500 mt of maize en route to Zimbabwe.
- With WFP technical support, the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit began distributing yellow split peas and vegetable oil donated by the Government of the Russian Federation, combined with government-supplied cereal, to support food security for 129,450 vulnerable people in 64 districts during the peak of the lean season.

### Nutrition

- WFP advanced nutrition programming through targeted technical exchanges, drawing lessons from Bangladesh's SBC strategy to inform Zambia's ongoing review. Insights on prioritising nutrition behaviours, formative research, and multisector engagement will support a more evidence-driven, behaviour-focused SBC framework to improve dietary practices and nutrition outcomes.
- WFP also engaged partners to strengthen community-level nutrition value addition, reviewing past experiences with solar dryers and other food processing equipment to inform a more sustainable, product-focused approach. The team agreed to explore collaboration with World Food Invest, engage UNICEF on First Foods, and map viable local nutritious products, with partners reconvening to refine an evidence-based implementation model to improve access to diverse, nutrient-rich foods.

### Smallholder Farmer Support

- WFP supported capacity strengthening for smallholder market systems through the training of 138 aggregators across four districts under the Zambia Breweries Outgrower Programme. The sessions enhanced skills in aggregation, entrepreneurship, business development, financial literacy, post-harvest loss management and use of the Maano Virtual Farmers Market, with all participants successfully onboarded to improve structured market access.
- The activity was jointly supported by WFP, with technical facilitation of Government staff from Ministries of

Agriculture, Community Development and Social Services and Small and Medium Enterprises Development. Provincial oversight reinforced government leadership and sustainability, ensuring the outgrower model remains anchored in national systems and contributes to stronger rural market linkages.

### Social Protection

- WFP provided technical assistance to strengthen the integration of Anticipatory Action within national social protection systems, leading coordinated engagement with the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit, UN agencies, and development partners to embed risk-informed early action in key safety nets. Efforts focused on strengthening government leadership, harmonising triggers and early warning protocols, and improving programme coherence to ensure anticipatory interventions protect at-risk households before shocks occur.

### School-Based Assistance

- To continue strengthening national systems for the Home-Grown School Meals (HGSM) programme, WFP provided technical assistance to enhance policy frameworks, coordination structures and multisector engagement. As a key technical lead, WFP participated in the HGSM strategic review in Kabwe district of Central province, supporting government and partners to assess programme design, evidence needs and priority actions to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the national programme.
- Additionally, to further reinforce South-South cooperation, WFP supported the Ministry of Education's participation in the African Day of School Feeding in Gaborone, where Zambia announced its role as host of the 2026 Global Child Nutrition Forum. Zambia also contributed to technical discussions on menu planning, highlighting ongoing national efforts to strengthen the quality and nutrition sensitivity of HGSM.

## FUNDING OVERVIEW

### Country Strategic Plan (2023-2028)



### Donors:

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the European Commission, the Governments of the People's Republic of China, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and Zambia, OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Private donors, The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and the World Health Organization (WHO).